

"Let's do what every American family, what every small business and family farmer is doing in these difficult times"

Washington, Feb 25 - U.S. Congressman Mike Pence gave the following speech from the floor of the U.S. House in opposition to the



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Democrats' omnibus spending bill: "I rise in opposition to the Omnibus Appropriations Act for fiscal year 2009.

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"During these challenging economic times, American families and small businesses every day are making sacrifices to make ends meet, and this Congress should be doing the same.

"With all the talk about fiscal responsibility in this chamber last night, and across Capitol Hill, it is time for our Democratic colleagues to put our money where their mouth is. Republicans are willing to come together and work across the aisle and make the hard choices necessary to put our fiscal house in order.

"But today, instead of doing that, we're passing one more massive government spending bill. And Republicans believe Congress instead should immediately freeze all federal spending at existing levels. No eight percent increase in the federal budget that's included in this bill. No earmarks. Let's just do what every American family is doing right now: let's find the savings, let's hold the line on expenses, and let's make it through these difficult times.

"The \$410 billion spending bill that we're considering today, that the majority has

brought to the floor, includes billions in wasteful spending, thousands of pork-barrel projects, and an eight percent increase in funding for government programs. It's the largest increase in discretionary spending since the years of the Carter Administration; with the sole exception of the days following 911, the largest increase in discretionary spending in a single year since the time I was in high school.

"And there are provisions in this bill that undermine historic pro-life safeguards enshrined in our longstanding policy and law. Five hundred million dollars for family planning organizations, language that guts the Kasten provisions preventing funding from going to organizations that support coercive abortion and forced sterilization, and a reduction of funding for community-based abstinence. And its earmarking as usual in this bill: a million dollars to research the red snapper in Florida, \$1.9 million for the Pleasure Beach Water Taxi Project in Connecticut, and \$2 million for promoting astronomy in Hawaii. I ask, are these projects really necessary in these challenging economic times?

"House Republicans and millions of Americans are saying, 'enough is enough.' Let's do what every American family, what every small business and family farmer is doing in these difficult times. Let's hold the line on spending, let's set aside this massive new omnibus spending bill, and let's pass immediately a spending freeze and begin the process of putting our House in order. Let's say 'no' to an eight percent increase in federal spending, 'no' to 9,000 earmarks. Let's say 'yes' to fiscal discipline and reform. Let's say 'yes' to an immediate freeze on all federal spending. This Congress should do no less, and make no less sacrifice than every other American family is making in these difficult days. I urge a 'no' vote on the omnibus spending bill."